

Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 26, 2003

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ASSEMBLYMAN KORETZ LAUDS U.S. SUPREME COURT SODOMY RULING

(Sacramento) Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) today praised the United States Supreme Court ruling overturning sodomy laws in 13 states in the case of Lawrence v. Texas.

“The U.S. Supreme Court has today overturned 200 years of oppression for gay and lesbian Americans. The Court has finally recognized that sex between consenting adults should not be regulated by the state,” said Koretz.

Throughout American history, sodomy laws have been used as a basis for discrimination against gay and lesbian people including denying child custody and visitation rights, employment and housing rights, and a wide array of inequities in American society.

“Sodomy laws actually made it a crime to be gay and provided a legal excuse for the inexcusable: discrimination against gay and lesbian people in the work place, in family law, and in society at large,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

In his dissenting opinion Justice Antonin Scalia said, “The court has taken sides in the culture war.” Responding to Justice Scalia’s opinion, Koretz said,

“The hypocrisy of Justice Scalia and others who have supported the most broadly defined sodomy laws is unbelievable. Some of these laws include behaviors in which a majority of Americans engage, including public officials and probably Justice Scalia himself.”

Many sodomy laws included prohibitions against heterosexual oral intercourse. According to the National Sexual Health Survey conducted by UCSF in 1996, more than 66% of 8500 adults over age 18 surveyed indicated a lifetime experience with oral sex.

Nine states and Puerto Rico criminalized certain consensual sexual behaviors between adults regardless of gender. They are Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia. Four states had decriminalized heterosexual sodomy, but retained criminal penalties for same-sex conduct. They are Texas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

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